

VOTE - Voter Outreach Through Education  
Washington Secretary of State

**UNITED STATES AND WORLD CURRICULUM GRADES 8-12  
STUDENT HANDOUT, LESSON 3**

**THEME: YOU CHOOSE THE RULES! WHICH RIGHTS ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?**

**ACTIVITY: Theater of the Mind**

In a land not so far away, and not so long ago, there lived people in a small, democratic nation with a Constitution like ours. However, that nation has just been taken over by a coup d'etat, and is now a dictatorship of one. Not wanting to alienate the people totally, the new leader has announced that ALL prior protected liberties will be removed in the new Constitution, ALL EXCEPT ONE, which the ruler will honor. It is up to the people to tell the ruler which right to retain. Each region of the nation is sending a delegation to a conference; the delegates will vote on which right to protect based on the best argument. The people of your region have chosen your group to represent them and trust your judgment.

Your task is to decide, as a delegation, what liberty or right you LEAST want every citizen to lose. Prepare a case for why that freedom is, in your view, the most essential to protecting the people from absolute dictatorship.

Be prepared to present this argument to the conference (class) as a whole in a 4-5 minute oral argument. The use of examples from history is encouraged, as is the use of supportive materials of your own creation (audio or videotapes, overheads, posters, banners, handouts, slides, etc.).

When each delegation has presented its case, the conference will deliberate aloud on the merits of each case and then vote on which liberty/right AND supportive arguments it chooses to present to the new government. Be sure that all in your delegation have a chance to share opinions before deciding on one liberty/right. Take care that the group decision truly represents the group. Should you choose a group facilitator and a recorder?

You will have to decide how best to present your case to the conference in the time allowed. Will you have each member present a part of your case or have one person do it all?

Summon up your imagination, put on your best role-playing skills, and prepare to present a compelling case!